Saskatchewan Libraries
Sharing knowledge in a multitype system

A THREE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN, 2010-2013

Saskatchewan Multitype Library Board

SEPTEMBER 2010

INTRODUCTION

The Libraries Co-operation Act was created in order to "*provide a mechanism for formalized co-operation across jurisdictional boundaries, in accordance with principles respecting continued individual responsibility on behalf of participants and respecting the importance of achieving consensus before making important decisions.*"

In 1999, the first Multitype Library Board was established to facilitate the co-operative development of the multitype library system in Saskatchewan. The continuing challenge for the Board is its role in identifying mutual needs and challenges among all library sectors and other information providers and developing policies and programs to encourage cooperative approaches to addressing those needs and challenges.

When the Multitype Library Board's strategic plan update was prepared in 2003, the Board defined its role as, "find[ing] library needs that overlap and allow[ing] these areas of mutual need to be the basis for the development of co-operative policies and programs." During the last five years, the Board has accomplished many goals outlined in the previous strategic plan and established or continued development of initiatives to further advance the multitype library system in the province.

The shared values and principles of the multitype library system that are necessary for successful collaboration continue to guide the Multitype Library Board's actions. Strong local autonomous library partners, consensus decision-making and deriving mutual benefit from co-operation are enduring values held by this Board.

Building upon the Board's achievements and the growing awareness of the multitype library system, the new strategic plan will ensure the interconnectedness among library sectors and other information providers for mutual benefit, as well as the long term sustainability and growth of the multitype library system.

The Board's flagship program is the Multitype Database Licensing Program which provides access to over 10,000 full-text journals. School divisions, post-secondary libraries, public libraries and special libraries, all contribute funding for this program.

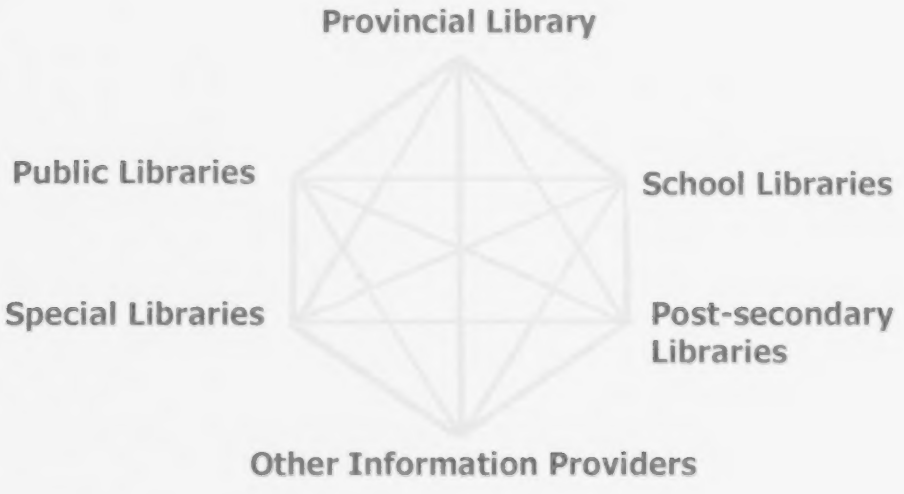
The Board has also established a digitization working group called the Saskatchewan Digital Alliance. The Saskatchewan Digital Alliance has developed conference workshops and played a key role in facilitating the Provincial Library & Literacy Office's Digitization Grant Program. The Digitization Grant Program resulted from Board discussions and has led to partnerships among public libraries, post-secondary libraries, archives, museums, art galleries, historical societies and other partners.

OVERVIEW OF THE MULTITYPE LIBRARY SYSTEM

The number of partners in the multitype library system continues to increase, involving public, school, post-secondary, and special libraries, while engagement with other information providers continues to deepen. The partners serve a range of client groups, have different mandates, and vary in size, facilities, resources, and governing structure. It is important to understand and respect the nature of these differences and identify similarities in order to cooperate effectively. The Provincial Library, as defined in *The Libraries Co-operation Act, 1996* and *The Public Library Act, 1996*, plays a key role in developing the multitype library system in Saskatchewan, including providing secretariat services to the Multitype Library Board.

THE SIX PARTNERS

Overview of the Multitype Library System



PLANNING CONTEXT

Nearing the end of the five-year planning period covered by the *Multitype Library Board Strategic Plan Update, November 2003*, the Board undertook a planning process to create a new strategic plan.

The process began with a discussion about the Board's history, the target audience for the strategic plan and a review of the expiring plan. The Board formed a sub-committee to work on an environmental scan and shared its findings with the multitype library system partners at the 2008 Multitype Library Board Annual General Meeting. Some highlights include:

- Demographic trends tell us that the workforce is aging while Saskatchewan has growing numbers of Aboriginal people and new Canadians. Libraries must respond to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population.
- Roles for librarians and other information providers are changing and skill requirements must adapt to reflect these changes. Librarians are becoming facilitators in accessing information and use new technologies in their daily work. Articulating these needs is especially crucial for Saskatchewan libraries given the current recruitment and retention challenges as well as the anticipation of numerous retirements.
- Space requirements for libraries have not diminished despite the growth of online collections. Library buildings need adequate space to accommodate computer stations, social activities, private study and other functions.

Group discussions provided crucial feedback for the Board in their strategic planning process. Three new Strategic Directions were developed by the Board after gathering information from a wide variety of sources and consulting with the multitype partners:

1. *Engage strategic partners in the continuing development of the multitype library system;*
2. *Identify opportunities for cooperation in order to address emerging issues;* and,
3. *Initiate mechanisms for cooperation.*

These new strategic directions indicate a shift in focus from establishing and building the multitype library system as outlined in the previous strategic plans to an emphasis on statements that provide clear direction/actions that reflect the Board's role and mandate to advise and make recommendations to the minister, libraries and library systems, and to involve libraries and other information providers in the development of the multitype library system.

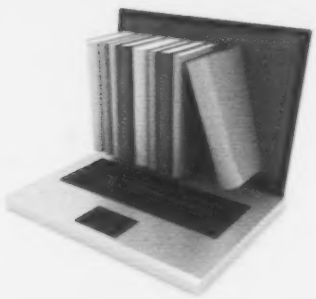
VISION

Successful communities through library co-operation.

MISSION

Through co-operation, libraries contribute to the social and economic development of citizens of Saskatchewan.

1 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 1: ENGAGE STRATEGIC PARTNERS IN THE CONTINUING DEVELOPMENT OF THE MULTITYPE LIBRARY SYSTEM



The multitype library system is well established and much progress has been made in addressing the challenges set out in previous strategic plans. Much of the Board's future success depends on nurturing relationships with existing and potential partners to address common concerns while continuing the development of the Board's ongoing programs.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

1.1 Enhance current partnerships such as the Multitype Database Licensing Program and the Saskatchewan Digital Alliance.

a. Research and identify methods to strengthen relationships with Multitype Database Licensing Program partners, other government agencies, the Saskatchewan Library Association, Saskatchewan School Libraries Association and with private sector organizations, to expand programs, and to increase quality information for people of Saskatchewan.
b. Produce policy recommendations that support Saskatchewan Digital Alliance's efforts in building digitization capacity throughout the province and increasing online access to Saskatchewan's cultural and historical artifacts.

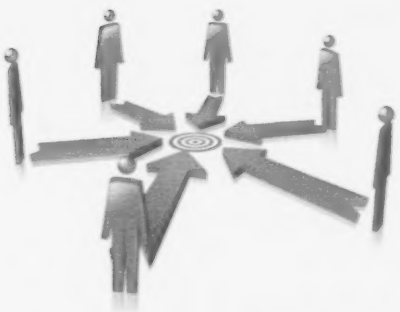
1.2 Continue to foster relationships among various information providers.

a. Work with First Nations and Métis groups to improve access to electronic information resources and library services for their communities.
b. Adapt programs to include a greater diversity of partners in order to benefit from additional perspectives and interests.

1.3 Create a sustainable environment for Saskatchewan libraries.

a. Inform interested organizations about current and proposed plans to attract professional librarians to Saskatchewan and to encourage a more representative workforce.
b. Support efforts to establish library student bursaries and other programs to develop the library workforce.

2 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 2: IDENTIFY OPPORTUNITIES FOR CO-OPERATION IN ORDER TO ADDRESS EMERGING ISSUES



The Multitype Library Board is committed to facilitating increased communication among information providers in Saskatchewan and creating an environment where stakeholders are better able to communicate with the Board. The Board intends to assume a leadership role in addressing matters that concern multiple sectors and will work with stakeholders to determine which issues are priorities.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

2.1 Enhance the ability of Saskatchewan libraries to address emerging issues.

a. Discuss topics of interest identified by individual sectors to determine if a multitype approach could benefit multiple sectors.
b. Gather information and data to help inform policy recommendations on issues such as creating a more representative workforce.

2.2 Use web technologies to foster the exchange of ideas among information professionals in Saskatchewan.

a. Create a digital presence for partners to post ideas, solicit advice and discuss partnerships with other information providers.
b. Continue to improve the Board's web presence, including the Saskatchewan Libraries website.

2.3 Initiate dialogue among the various library sectors regarding their roles in providing consistent information services throughout a patron's lifetime.

a. Hold a topical forum or use the Board's Annual General Meeting to begin a consultation process on "smooth transitions" (moving from one type of information provider to another throughout a patron's lifetime).

3 STRATEGIC DIRECTION 3: INITIATE MECHANISMS FOR CO-OPERATION

The Multitype Library Board facilitates supports and promotes cross-sector cooperation among libraries and other information providers. The Board endeavours to create an environment where innovative approaches to emerging issues will be found by leveraging technological solutions and by developing policy options that respect the needs communicated by all stakeholders.

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES:

3.1 Enhance existing Board programs and facilitate the development of new programs.

a. Share information about the benefits of Board programs with potential partners.
b. Where the need for a new program has been identified, the Board will gather input from stakeholders, provide policy recommendations to the Ministry of Education and establish a working group or committee if necessary.

3.2 Establish partnerships with interested parties to address human resource issues in libraries.

a. Continue developing a representative workforce strategy. Support initiatives by the Saskatchewan Library Association and others working in parallel on this issue.
b. Encourage the development of a Saskatchewan-based Master of Library and Information Science/Master of Information Science program that includes training for teacher librarians.
c. Work with post-secondary institutions that may be interested in providing online librarian and library technician courses.
d. Work with stakeholders to develop an internship/co-op student program.

3.3 Further develop the online presence of Saskatchewan libraries through the creation of a digital commons.

a. Support stakeholder's efforts to aggregate Saskatchewan's digital resources and digital heritage.
b. Develop a digital space to share information about training, online tutorials, promotion and careers.

LIBRARIES & THE GOVERNMENT OF SASKATCHEWAN

The Multitype Library Board recognizes the important role libraries play in addressing the direction provided by the Government of Saskatchewan, including support for education and innovation, stronger First Nations and Métis partnerships and support for Saskatchewan families. Saskatchewan's libraries have policies and programs in place to address all of these areas and by identifying ways of working together they can have an even greater impact.

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP

The Multitype Library Board's programs and initiatives align with the Ministry of Education's strategies and actions in a number of areas. A few are highlighted below.

Support improved student achievement and literacy of all learners

- A growing body of research indicates that well-stocked school libraries, with professional staff, have a positive impact on student achievement. The Board strongly supports school libraries and school libraries are integrally involved in the multitype library system.
- The Multitype Library Board participated in stakeholder discussions and was represented on the Provincial Panel on Student Achievement by Joanne Beltramini.

Provide equitable opportunities for all students

- All Saskatchewan school divisions participate in the Multitype Database Licensing Program and negotiations are underway to include First Nations schools.
- The Multitype Database Licensing Program continues to make a vast array of subscription-based information resources available to the people of Saskatchewan through cost-effective, province-wide licenses.
- The Board is looking at additional initiatives to increase the number of highly-trained professional staff in Saskatchewan's libraries.
- The Board also supports digitization initiatives that make special collections available to all students and researchers via the internet.

Support improved literacy and student achievement of First Nations and Métis learners

- The Board has developed policy recommendations for libraries and the ministry in this area and will place a great deal of emphasis on First Nations and Métis issues in the coming year.
- The Board also sees increasing First Nations and Métis staff levels in libraries as an essential element in promoting library services, including literacy, to the aboriginal population.

Board recommendations have led to programs or initiatives such as the Saskatchewan Library Education Bursary and the competency profile for library professionals in the public service. The Board provided rationale to the Ministry of Finance for the removal of Provincial Sales Tax from Multitype Database Licensing Program resources, allowing the program to allocate the saving to additional electronic products for the benefit of all Saskatchewan residents. The Board also sponsors sessions that provide key information for library professionals at annual Saskatchewan Libraries conferences and has shared its background research on developing a representative workforce with the library community.

ACTIVITIES

In recognition of the changing nature of information and communication, the Board developed a wiki website to enable geographically disbursed sub-committee to collect and share documents, diagrams and links to articles and add comments. This shared knowledge base helped inform the environmental scan discussion held with stakeholders at the Board's Annual General Meeting in 2008. Results of those group discussions were instrumental in the ensuing strategic planning activities.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Board would like to thank numerous people who contributed to the strategic planning process:

- All the partners who attended the 2008 Annual General Meeting and participated in the group discussions on the environmental scan
- The Board's sub-committee who worked on the environmental scan: Julie McKenna, Heather West, Robin Canham, Deborah Lee, Joylene Campbell
- Past and current Board members who participated in strategic planning activities
- Provincial Library staff who support Multitype Library Board activities: Brett Waytuck, Jack Ma and Elgin Bunston
- Susan Neden, who facilitated the Board's initial strategic planning session

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